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SECRET CHASER™

Vol: 2 Created By: Tamayo Akiyama

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Chaser

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SECRET CHASER

Volume 2

Tamayo Akiyama

TOKYOPOP®

HAMBURG // LONDON // LOS ANGELES // TOKYO

TWINKLE STARS

SECRET CASES

CASE:6 Compound Eyes 005

CASE:7 The Target: Alice 061

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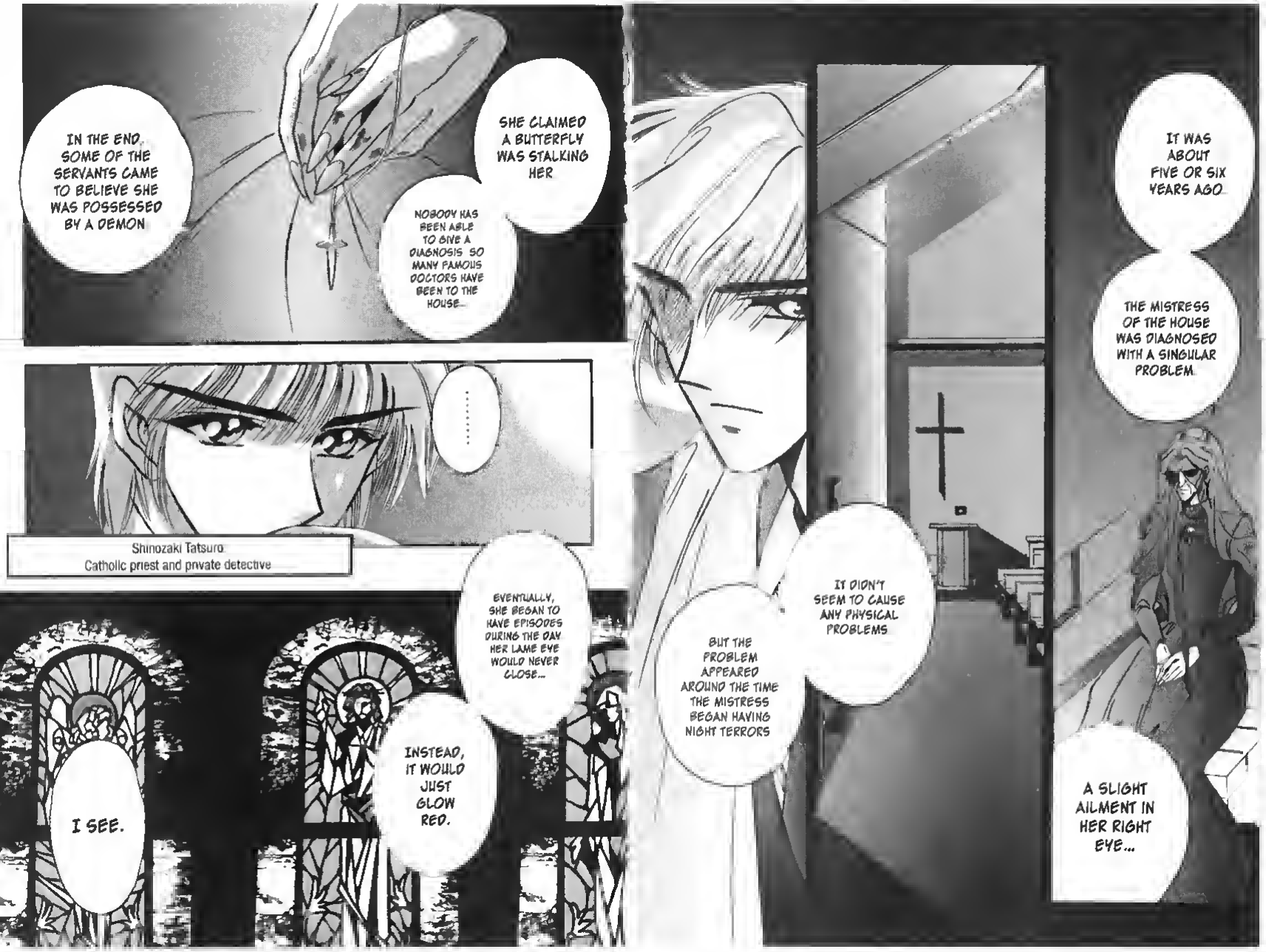
Compound Eyes
Case 6

SECRET CHASER 2

EXCUSE ME.
MISS?
Kyaaaaa!!

AIGH! I CAN'T STAND THIS!
I'M SO BUSY I COULD DIE!!
WHAT'S WITH ALL THIS PAPERWORK? I'M DROWNING HERE!
KATATA
THE BUTTERFLY...
IT'S *WATCHING* ME!

IT'S BAD ENOUGH THAT MANAGEMENT'S IDEA OF FILING WAS TO TOSS EVERYTHING IN A SHOEBOX.
BUT NOW I HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT OUR EXPANSION, TOO! IT'S ENOUGH TO GIVE A KID AN ULCER.
YOU LOOK EXHAUSTED.
GREAT...
Aileen Kaizuka
New head of the Kaizuka Group, the world's largest corporation
And heroine of our story, too!
YOU MEAN THAT WEIRD DETECTIVE PRIEST CALLED THE SECRET CHASER?
HE HELPED THE PREVIOUS BOSS OUT OF A FEW JAMS.
WHY DON'T YOU HAVE CODE S TAKE CARE OF THINGS FOR A WHILE?
ガタッ
?!
DO YOU WANT TO HEAR THE WIRETAP?
WE'VE RECEIVED A COMMISSION FROM THE OUTSIDE.
FATHER...
PLEASE LISTEN TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY.


IT WAS ABOUT FIVE OR SIX YEARS AGO.
THE MISTRESS OF THE HOUSE WAS DIAGNOSED WITH A SINGULAR PROBLEM.
A SLIGHT AILMENT IN HER RIGHT EYE...
IT DIDN'T SEEM TO CAUSE ANY PHYSICAL PROBLEMS.
BUT THE PROBLEM APPEARED AROUND THE TIME THE MISTRESS BEGAN HAVING NIGHT TERRORS.
EVENTUALLY, SHE BEGAN TO HAVE EPISODES DURING THE DAY. HER LAME EYE WOULD NEVER CLOSE...
INSTEAD, IT WOULD JUST GLOW RED.
I SEE.
SHE CLAIMED A BUTTERFLY WAS STALKING HER
NOBODY HAS BEEN ABLE TO GIVE A DIAGNOSIS. SO MANY FAMOUS DOCTORS HAVE BEEN TO THE HOUSE...
IN THE END, SOME OF THE SERVANTS CAME TO BELIEVE SHE WAS POSSESSED BY A DEMON.
.....
Shinozaki Tatsuro
Catholic priest and private detective

FATHER...
THOSE AREN'T ROSARY BEADS, ARE THEY?
NO.
THESE ARE THE TOOLS WITH WHICH I PRAY.
PLEASE, LEAVE THIS TO ME.
SEIJO SHIORI...
AGE 16. HER MOTHER DIED SIX YEARS AGO, AND HER FATHER PASSED AWAY NOT LONG AFTER.
WHY DOES THAT SOUND FAMILIAR?

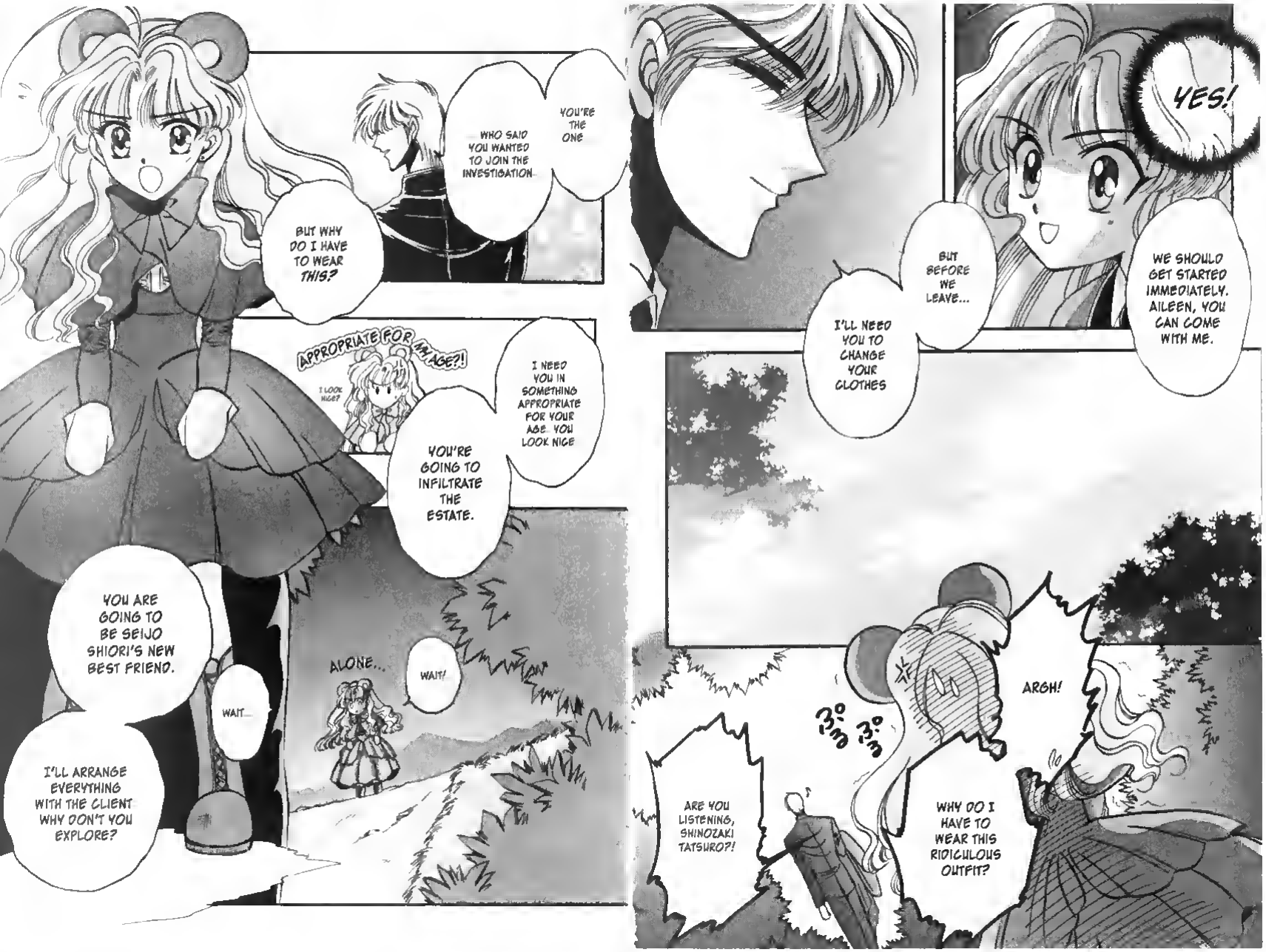
PLEASE PRAY FOR HER!
PRAY THAT SHE MAY BE RELEASED FROM THIS DEMON AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
PLEASE!
...LET US PRAY
THAT A HELPING HAND MAY REACH OUT TO THIS YOUNG GIRL...

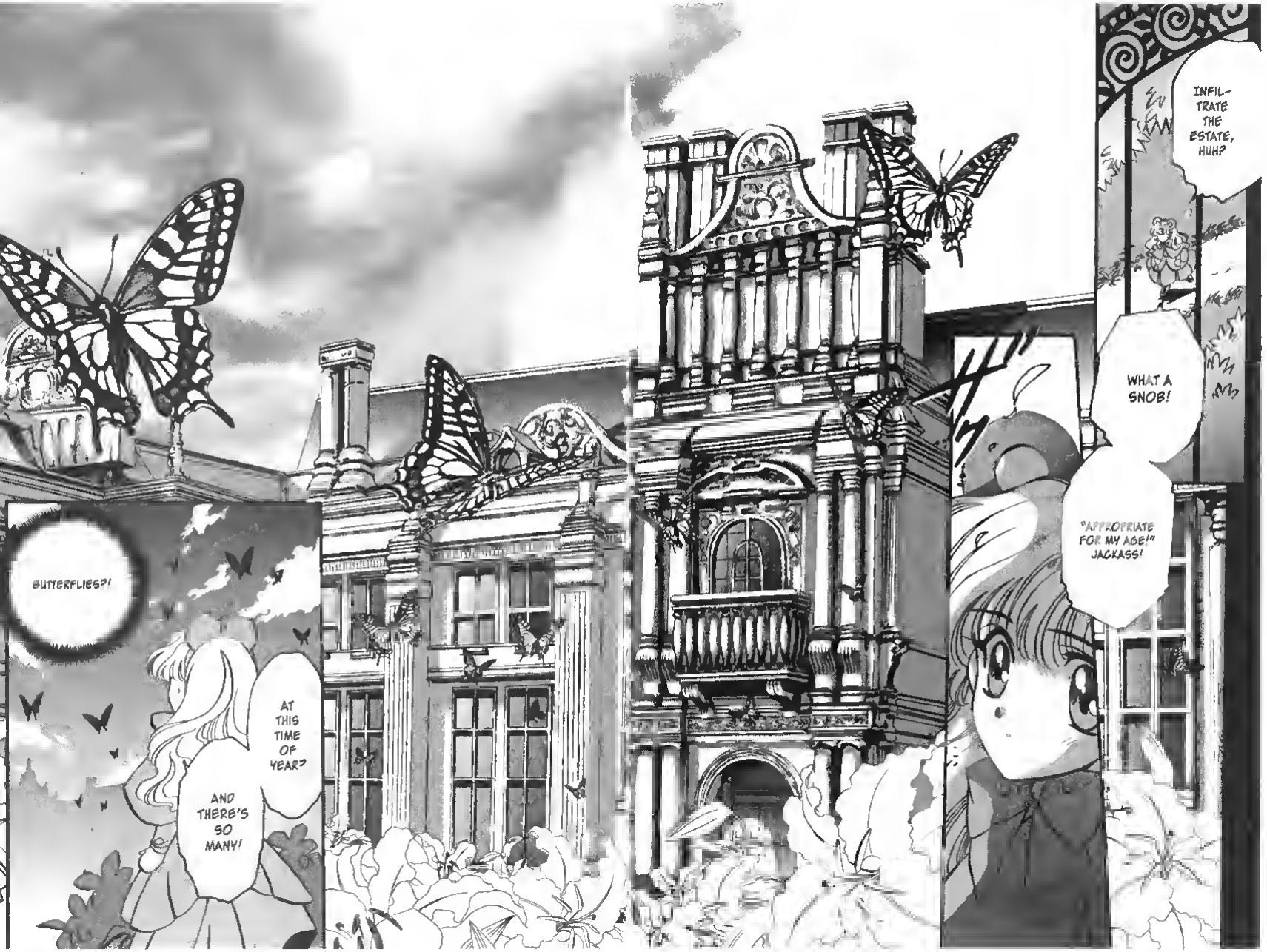
GOOD MORNING, NANAMI-KUN
OH, AILEEN-CHAN! GOOD MORNING
AIGH!
HUH?
IT'S...A FROG?
びろーん
IN STICKER FORM?!
I TAPED THAT SHOW LAST WEEK!
DO POP IDOLS HAVE SECRET IDENTITIES THESE DAYS?
COME ON!
OOH! NANAMI'S TEA IS ALWAYS SO DELICIOUS!
I SWEAR...
I COULD HAVE SWORN I JUST SAW YOU SINGING ON A TV I PASSED DOWNTOWN.
パタ!
DON'T PLAY DUMB WITH ME.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
HEY. THAT'S THE GIRL YOUR LATEST CLIENT WAS TALKING ABOUT, ISN'T IT?

Kobayashi Kei
Shinozaki's assistant, pop idol and high school student
Honjo Nanami,
Shinozaki's assistant and college freshman
YOU REMEMBER, THE SEIJO FAMILY?
THE FATHER DIED ABOUT THREE YEARS AGO AND THE ONLY DAUGHTER INHERITED THE ENTIRE COEPORATION?
THAT'S HER?
SHE REMINDS ME OF THAT OBNOXIOUS BRAT...
...WHO'S BEEN HANGING AROUND THIS CHURCH RECENTLY.
I FEEL A HEADACHE COMING ON.
ANYWAY, SINCE SHE'S CLOSER TO OUR AGE, MAYBE THE OLD PRIEST ISN'T THE BEST MAN FOR THE JOB THIS TIME.
SHE NEEDS A MORE DELICATE TOUCH. SOMEONE LIKE MYSELF!

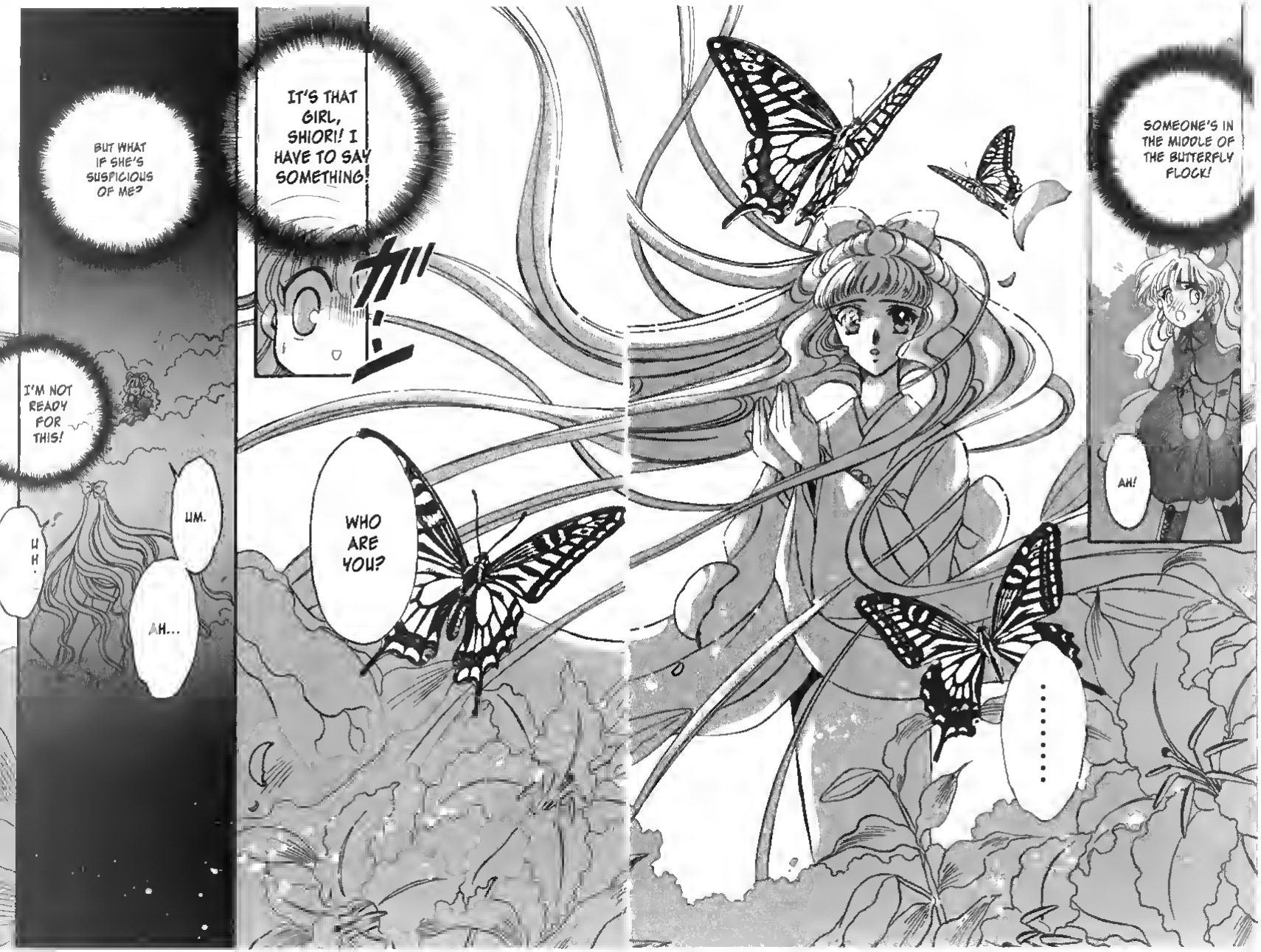
WE'RE LOOKING AT A CONSPIRACY
ALTHOUGH ADMITTEDLY I DON'T KNOW IF HER VISIT TODAY HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT.
TWO PARENTS DIE IN MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES
A YOUNG GIRL INHERITS THE WHOLE OF THE FAMILY FORTUNE MONEY INCAPABLE OF ADDRESSING HER BIZARRE AILMENT
YOU DON'T RUN ACROSS CASES LIKE THIS EVERY DAY
I'M JOINING THE INVESTIGATION
I DON'T MIND THIS SHOULD PROVE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY
AS OWNER, I IMAGINE THERE ARE NO COMPLAINTS
SENSEI?!

I KNOW THAT'S THE PHRASE USED BY THOSE WHO KNOW WHAT THIS CHURCH IS *REALLY* ALL ABOUT.
I HEARD THE PASS-WORD.
HAVE YOU BEEN BUGGING US AGAIN?
A SEEMINGLY INNOCENT QUESTION THAT SIGNALS FOR AN UNUSUAL PRIEST WHO MOONLIGHTS AS A PRIVATE DETECTIVE
"THOSE AREN'T ROSARY BEADS, ARE THEY?"
JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE THE OWNER—
NOW, ABOUT SHIORI...
I DID SOME RESEARCH ON MY OWN.
THERE'S EVIDENCE THAT RELEVANT INFORMATION HAS BEEN ERASED.
HER PARENTS MIGHT NOT HAVE PASSED AWAY AT THE SAME TIME...
IF I'M RIGHT...
...BUT *SOMETHING* ABOUT THEIR DEATHS IS BEING COVERED UP.

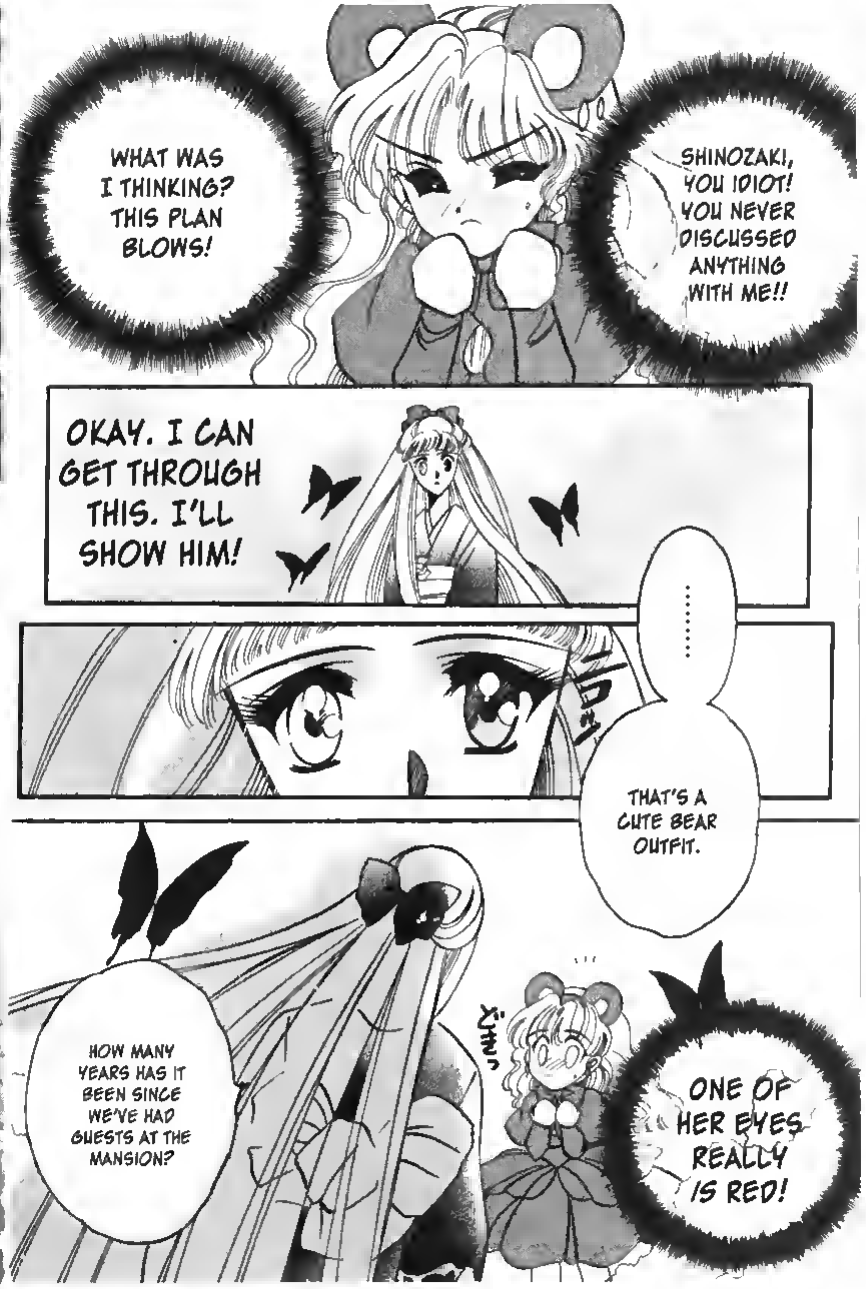

YES!
WE SHOULD GET STARTED IMMEDIATELY. AILEEN, YOU CAN COME WITH ME.
BUT BEFORE WE LEAVE...
I'LL NEED YOU TO CHANGE YOUR CLOTHES
ARGH!
3.3.3.
WHY DO I HAVE TO WEAR THIS RIDICULOUS OUTFIT?
ARE YOU LISTENING, SHINOZAKI TATSURO?!
YOU'RE THE ONE
WHO SAID YOU WANTED TO JOIN THE INVESTIGATION
BUT WHY DO I HAVE TO WEAR THIS?
APPROPRIATE FOR MY AGE?!
I LOOK NICE?
I NEED YOU IN SOMETHING APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR AGE. YOU LOOK NICE
YOU'RE GOING TO INFILTRATE THE ESTATE.
ALONE...
WAIT!
WAIT...
YOU ARE GOING TO BE SEIJO SHIORI'S NEW BEST FRIEND.
I'LL ARRANGE EVERYTHING WITH THE CLIENT. WHY DON'T YOU EXPLORE?


BUTTERFLIES?!
AT THIS TIME OF YEAR?
AND THERE'S SO MANY!
INFIL-TRATE THE ESTATE, HUH?
WHAT A SNOB!
"APPROPRIATE FOR MY AGE!" JACKASS!

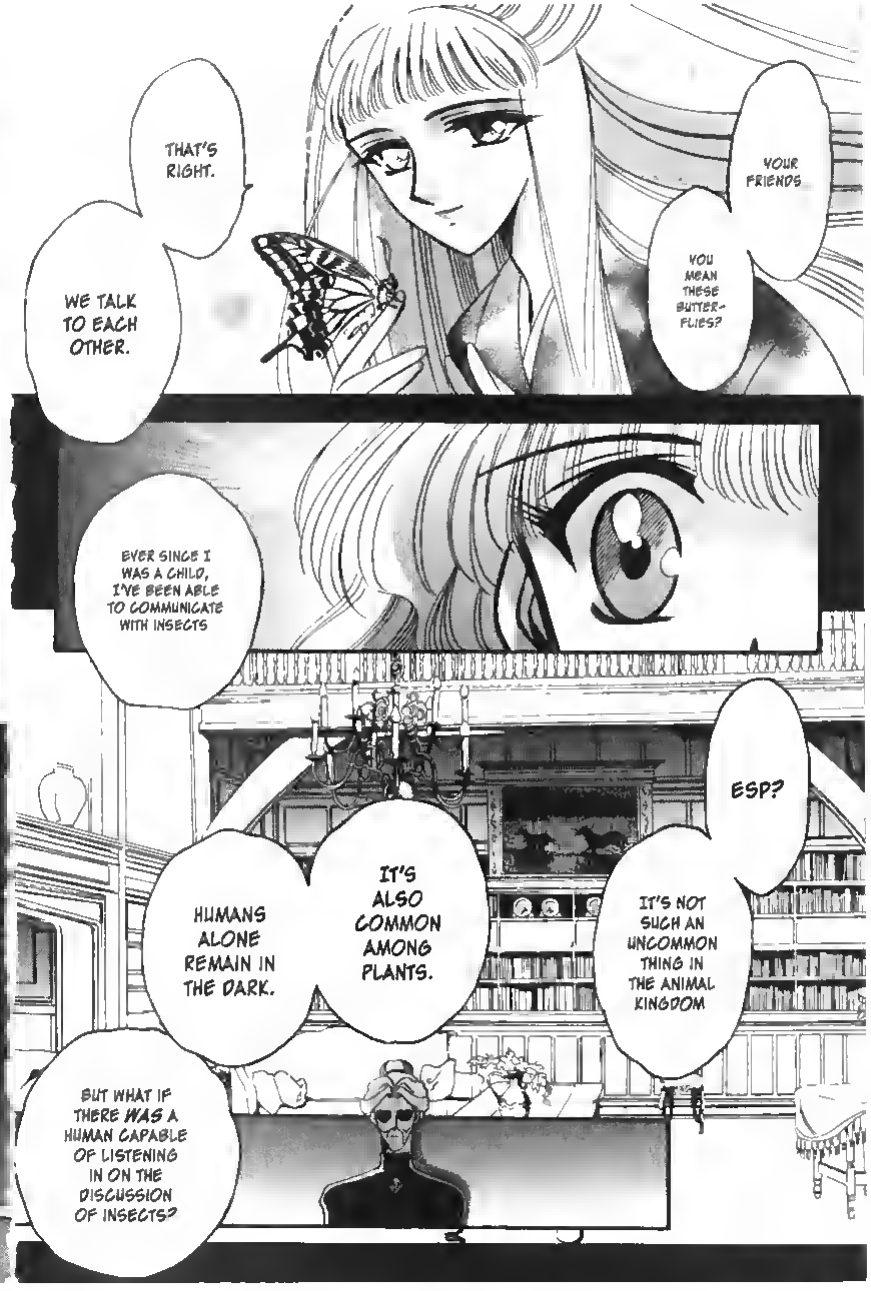
A PERSON?!
SO PRETTY...
THAT'S STRANGE. BUT WHY...


BUT WHAT IF SHE'S SUSPICIOUS OF ME?
I'M NOT READY FOR THIS!
UH.
UM.
AH...
IT'S THAT GIRL, SHIORI! I HAVE TO SAY SOMETHING!
WHO ARE YOU?
SOMEONE'S IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BUTTERFLY FLOCK!
AH!
.....

UM. AILEEN.
I'M SHIORI.
WHAT A PRETTY NAME.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
I'M, UH, HERE TO...
WHAT'S HAPPENING? I CAN FEEL MY PULSE GETTING FASTER.
OH! SO YOU'RE THE ONE
...HANG OUT WITH YOU TODAY.
I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE.
I HEARD FROM GRANDMA.
EVEN MY FRIENDS ARE HAPPY TO SEE YOU.
PLEASE, MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE AND STAY A WHILE


WHAT WAS I THINKING? THIS PLAN BLOWS!
SHINOZAKI, YOU IDIOT! YOU NEVER DISCUSSED ANYTHING WITH ME!!
OKAY. I CAN GET THROUGH THIS. I'LL SHOW HIM!
.....
THAT'S A CUTE BEAR OUTFIT.
HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN SINCE WE'VE HAD GUESTS AT THE MANSION?
ONE OF HER EYES REALLY IS RED!

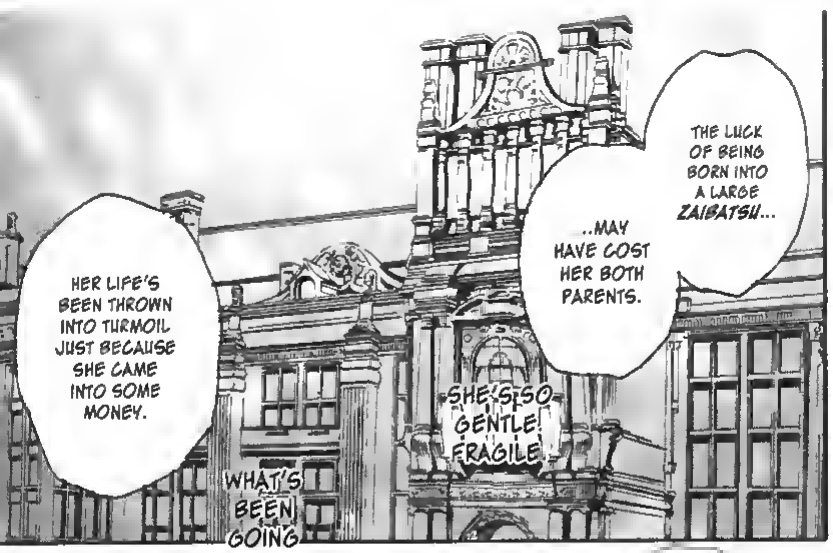
I IMAGINE SHIORI RECEIVES THEIR MESSAGES IN DREAMS.
THE BUTTERFLIES MUST HAVE SEEN SOMETHING.
SOMETHING...
YOU'RE SAYING THEY SAW SOMETHING?
I'M SURE OF IT.
THE CREATURES ARE TRYING TO TELL HER SOMETHING.


YOUR FRIENDS
YOU MEAN THESE BUTTERFLIES?
THAT'S RIGHT.
WE TALK TO EACH OTHER.
EVER SINCE I WAS A CHILD, I'VE BEEN ABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH INSECTS
ESP?
IT'S NOT SUCH AN UNCOMMON THING IN THE ANIMAL KINGDOM
IT'S ALSO COMMON AMONG PLANTS.
HUMANS ALONE REMAIN IN THE DARK.
BUT WHAT IF THERE WAS A HUMAN CAPABLE OF LISTENING IN ON THE DISCUSSION OF INSECTS?

I SENSE SOMETHING... A BLOODLUST.
SOME TEA...
Kyaaaaa!!
COME ON, LET'S TAKE YOU TO YOUR ROOM.
SHI--
SHIORI...
GRAB HOLD OF ME.
WHAT...?
WHAT IS IT?
WHAT IS IT, AILEEN-CHAN?
?!
OH,
IT'S GRANDMA.
COME, LET'S HAVE SOME TEA.
I WANT TO TALK SOME MORE WITH YOU... OKAY?

どが
どが
I SWEAR! I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS.
HOW COULD HE TOSS ME INTO THIS PLACE WITHOUT ANY KIND OF PLAN?
I CAN'T EVEN MAKE A PHONE CALL FROM HERE! WHEN I GET BACK I'M GOING TO GIVE HIM A PIECE OF MY MIND
THAT OTHER POSSIBILITY...
I TOUCHED UPON IT EARLIER. A CONSPIRACY.
THE MYSTERIOUS DEATHS OF SHIORI'S PARENTS MIGHT NOT BE SO MYSTERIOUS AFTER ALL.
PERHAPS THEY WERE MURDERED.

NOW .
SHIORI... IS SHE ALL RIGHT?
IT WASN'T JUST MY IMAGINATION
THE BLOODLUST IN THE AIR..
WHAT?
SHINOZAKI LEFT ME HERE?
BEFORE I CAME HERE, I RESEARCHED THIS ESTATE AND DISCOVERED ANOTHER POSSIBILITY.
WHAT WAS HE THINKING?


HER LIFE'S BEEN THROWN INTO TURMOIL JUST BECAUSE SHE CAME INTO SOME MONEY.
THE LUCK OF BEING BORN INTO A LARGE ZAIBATSU...
..MAY HAVE COST HER BOTH PARENTS.
SHE'S SO GENTLE! FRAGILE

WHAT'S BEEN GOING THROUGH HER MIND ALL THIS TIME?
A LIFETIME OF EXCLUSIVE TUTORS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION...
SHE'S PRACTICALLY UNDER HOUSE ARREST.
I KNOW WHAT THAT'S LIKE
I CAN BARELY REMEMBER MY OWN PARENTS FACES I HAVE NO IDEA HOW MANY BROTHERS OR SISTERS I MIGHT HAVE
FAMILY?
WHAT IS FAMILY?
I INHERITED THE ENTIRE KAIZUKA GROUP WITH THE STROKE OF A PEN.
SOMEONE JUST OPENED A DOOR FOR ME ONE DAY AND I STEPPED INTO THE OUTSIDE WORLD

は
A BUTTERFLY?!
.....
SHIORI...
AM I SEEING THINGS?

IT WAS OBVIOUS JUST BY TALKING TO HER FOR A FEW MINUTES.
SHE'S COMPLETELY SUBMISSIVE.
SHIORI... WE'RE NOT REALLY THE SAME.
SHE DOESN'T HAVE MY LEADERSHIP SKILLS
HEY!
WHAT'S THIS WEIRD BLACK STAIN?
カタン
AND YET SOMEHOW THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT...
...THE SEIJO GROUP IS POSTING ENORMOUS GAINS UNDER HER LEADERSHIP.
WHAT IF SHIORI IS JUST A PUPPET... ...BUT WHO WOULD BE PULLING THE STRINGS?

I WONDER. .
.WHAT THE PREVIOUS BOSS WAS LIKE.
COULD HE HAVE BEEN...
...MY...
.....
LET'S NOT GET NEEDLESSLY SENTIMENTAL.
I WAS SELECTED TO LEAD THE COMPANY FROM AMONG DOZENS OF CANDIDATES.
I MAY BE A GENIUS, BUT EVEN I CAN SEE MY AGE WAS... UNUSUAL.
THE OLD BOSS WAS EITNER AN IDIOT...
...OR A CREEPY PERVERT.

UNH...
.....
AILEEN...
SHIORI!
WHAT A RELIEF!
I FEEL MUCH BETTER NOW.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK SO PALE.
I NEED TO ASK YOU SOMETHING, SHIORI.
COME WITH ME.
I KNEW IT!
ALWAYS TRUST YOUR GUT.

AND SHE JUST LEFT SHIORI'S ROOM! OH MY GOD!
BLOOD!
TH--
THAT'S...
HER HANDS ARE SOAKED IN BLOOD
NO!
?!
IT CAN'T BE!!

WHAT'S GRANDMA DOING?
AILEEN-CHAN...
COME ON!!
RUN!
I THINK WE'RE GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF YOUR PARENTS' DEATHS.
MOM AND DAD?
I KNEW I'D SEEN YOUR GRANDMOTHER SOMEWHERE BEFORE. SHE MADE A BUZZ YEARS AGO BY GRADUATING WITH HONORS FROM AN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY.

WHAT'S THE RUSH?
JUST HURRY.
?!

I KNEW IT! THE OLD WOMAN!
GRANDMA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
A BLOODY AXE...

STOP IT...
DON'T KILL HER.
FATHER...
SHI...
DON'T KILL HER!

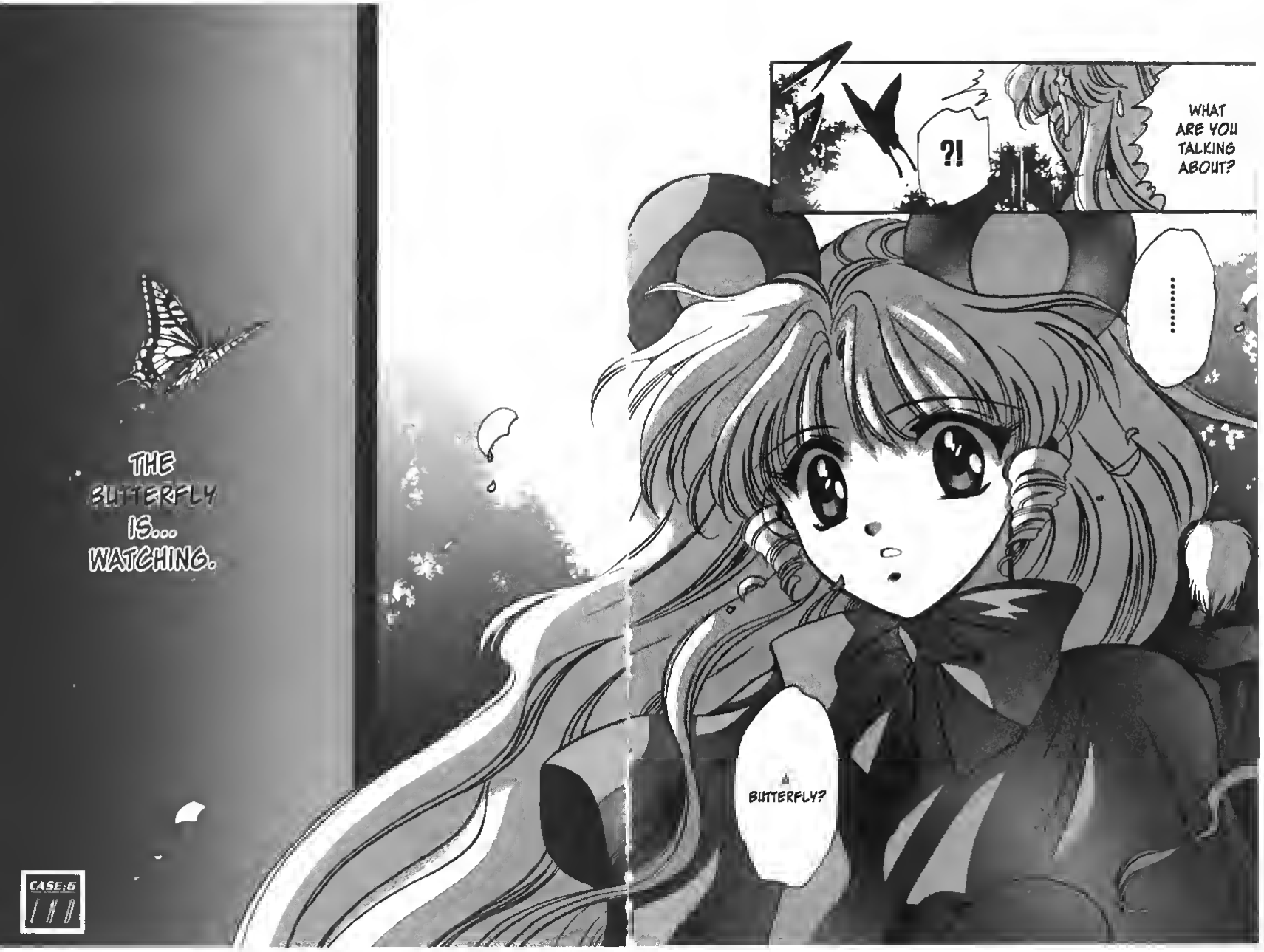
SHE USED YOU TO SEIZE THE SEIJO ZAIBATSU.
SHE GOT HER DEGREE IN BUSINESS.
YOUR PARENTS STOOD IN THE WAY.
THE BUTTERFLIES ARE WATCHING...
STOP IT!!
FATHER... MOTHER...

SHI...
...HELP..
SHIORI...
HELP ME...
PLEASE...

YOU'LL NEVER...
...HAVE TO HAVE NIGHTMARES AGAIN.
REST IN PEACE.
I HAVE RELEASED YOU FROM THE RED EYE OF THE INSECTS' CURSE.
IT'S OVER.

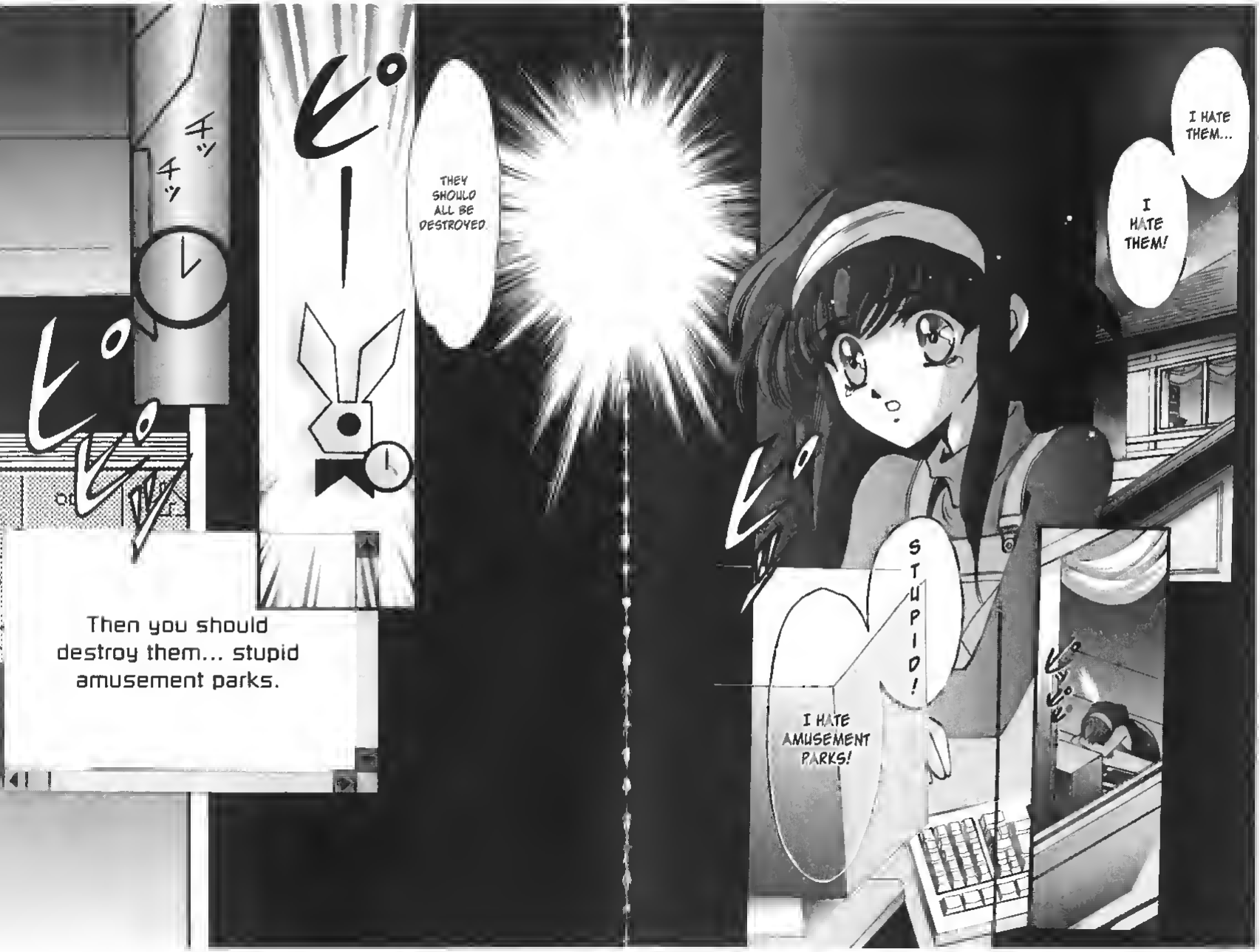
BUT IT WAS A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.
I CURSE MYSELF EVERY DAY!
SHIORI WAS SO WEAK AS A CHILD. ALWAYS SO ALONE...
I THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE NICE IF I COULD GIVE HER SOME FRIENDS.
HER FATHER KILLED HER MOTHER— PERHAPS A LOVERS' QUARREL. AND THEN YOU COVERED UP HIS DEATH.
SHE WOULD NEVER HAVE TO ENDURE THAT PAIN
IF I HADN'T INTERFERED, SHE WOULD NEVER HAVE COMMITTED THOSE MURDERS.
I IMAGINE HE WAS A HORRID SPECIMEN.
SHIORI WITNESSED HER MOTHER'S DEATH THROUGH A NEARBY BUTTERFLY'S EYES.
PUTTING A HYPHOTIC SPELL ON HER WAS ONE THING. BUT YOU DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO SHUT IT OFF. AND SO YOU SIMPLY COVERED THINGS UP.
I SHALL ACCEPT MY PUNISHMENT.
THAT MOMENT LODGED ITSELF IN HER MIND'S EYE, GIVING BIRTH TO A CHAIN OF INSANITY.
EVER SINCE THAT INCIDENT...
WHENEVER SHE EXPERIENCED SEIZURES, SHE WOULD HARM SMALL ANIMALS. WOULDN'T SHE?
AND YOU WERE ALWAYS THE ONE TO CLEAN UP THE MESS.
I WAS A FOOL.
MORE THAN THAT...
I THOUGHT I COULD EASE HER PAIN MYSELF.
YOU PUT THE SPELL ON HER, SO THAT SHE WOULD BE ABLE TO SPEAK WITH INSECTS.
BY HYPNOTIZING HER, YOU AWAKENED A DORMANT HUMAN POWER BUT THAT ABILITY TURNED HER INTO A VICTIM

HEY, SHINOZAKI!
WHY DIDN'T YOU WAKE ME UP?
HUH? WHAT AM I DOING HERE?
I NEED TO SEE THE CLIENT.
WE'RE GOING NOW, RIGHT?
WELL...
I'M AFRAID THAT CASE...
... IS NOW CLOSED.
WHAT?!
MY JOB ENDS HERE
NOTHING LESS THAN WATCHING OVER THIS YOUNG GIRL UNTIL THE END.
IT HAS ALREADY BEGUN
YOUR PUNISHMENT...
MY JOB IS TO FREE THOSE ENSNARED BY HYPNOTIC SPELLS.
IT IS DONE.


THE BUTTERFLY IS... WATCHING.
CASE:6
?!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
.....
BUTTERFLY?

SECRET SERVICE

YUU KIBA
CLAMP


I HATE THEM...
I HATE THEM!
ピー
THEY SHOULD ALL BE DESTROYED.
チッ
チッ
レ
ピピ
Then you should destroy them... stupid amusement parks.
STUPID!
I HATE AMUSEMENT PARKS!
ピピ

WOW!
WE'RE FINALLY HERE.
THIS IS IT, NANAMI-KUN.
WELCOME TO BIG CLARION!
I HAD THE KAIZUKA ZAIBATSU POOL OUR TOP RESOURCES TO CREATE OUR VERY FIRST THEME PARK.
EVEN THOUGH WE'RE HERE TO WORK WE CAN STILL HAVE FUN, TOO.
RIGHT, NANAMI-KUN?
UM, UH HUH. THANKS A LOT.
THIS PLACE IS PRETTY COOL.

I'D SEEN THE COMMERCIALS, BUT...
IT'S MUCH BIGGER THAN YOU'D EXPECT, RIGHT?
WE DECIDED TO GO ALL THE WAY.
CLARION IS THE LARGEST THEME PARK IN THE WORLD.
...ARE BASED ON PROPRIETARY TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPED BY OUR ZAIBATSU RESEARCH DEPARTMENT.
ALMOST ALL OF THE RIDES...
PLANET TEREZART IS OUR MAIN ATTRACTION.
あわわ
IT'S THE FASTEST INDOOR ROLLERCOASTER EVER CREATED!
YOU'D NEED A FIGHTER JET TO MATCH THE G FORCES ON THIS THING.
IT'S SURE TO BE ANOTHER RECORD QUARTER FOR US.
ANOTHER HIT!

CLARION IS COMPLETELY AUTOMATED. EVEN THE RESTAURANTS RELY ON SOFTWARE INSTEAD OF WAIT STAFF.
EVERYTHING IS OVERSEEN BY OUR CORPORATE SERVER NUB, WHICH LINKS ALL OF OUR REMOTE BRANCHES.
TODAY'S VISITOR DATA WILL BE USED TO CALCULATE REVENUE FORECASTS FOR THE NEXT DECADE.
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO MAKE EVEN THE SMALLEST ERROR.
THAT'S WHY I WANT YOU HERE ON THE GROUND, TO MAKE SURE THE HUMAN ELEMENT IS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.
AFTER ALL, COMPUTERS DON'T RIDE ROLLER COASTERS.
OUR SOFTWARE IS USELESS IF PEOPLE DON'T ENJOY THEMSELVES!
IN THE END, IT COMES DOWN TO PEOPLE LIKE US..

HEY, NANAMI-KUN!
DO YOU WANT TO GO FOR A RIDE?
YOUTH DEMOGRAPHIC?
I'D LIKE TO GET SOME FEEDBACK FROM THE YOUTH DEMOGRAPHIC.
WELL, UM, I...
MY AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM...
HUH?
ANYWAY, LET'S RUN THROUGH THE JOB I NEED YOU TO DO.
BUT THAT'S WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOU.
YOU'RE SO UNDEPENDABLE
OH, WELL.
SURE
I'M SUPPOSED TO TRACK THE MOVEMENT OF PARK GUESTS AND GIVE YOU A DETAILED LOG
EXACTLY.
IT'S JUST A PRECAUTION.

Kyaaaa!!
I KNEW SHE WANTED TO RIDE IT!
I'M GLAD...
.....
SHE'S KIND OF CUTE AFTER ALL, THAT AILEEN-CHAN.
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A TEST RIDE YOURSELF, AILEEN-CHAN?
WHAT?
ME?!
PERHAPS.
IN THAT CASE..
THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE KAIZUKA GROUP!
I THINK IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR MORALE TO SEE THE CHAIRMAN GETTING HER HANDS DIRTY
I MEAN, SOMEONE IN MY POSITION CAN'T WASTE TIME ON SILLY RIDES!
NO WAY!
WHY DON'T YOU GO ON AHEAD? I'LL STAY HERE AND START COLLECTING THAT DATA.
OKAY?

Y-YOU...
HEY...
ハッ
ガッ
ARJ
THAT WAS...
SHE HAD THE SAME PROPRIETARY LAPTOP I'VE GOT!
WHAT COLD EYES SHE HAD...
BUT SHE'S JUST A LITTLE GIRL. IT MUST BE A MISTAKE.

BUT SHE'S AT THAT AGE WHERE SHE MUST WANT TO PLAY...
ALL THAT RESPONSIBILITY.
I BET IT'S HARD FOR HER.
HEADING SUCH A GIANT CORPORATION SO YOUNG.
ABSOLUTELY...
?!
ドドド
THAT'S...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M SORRY!

IT WAS LIKE SHE WAS POSSESSED BY SOMETHING.
WILL THIS PLACE DO?
HEH.
TIME TO START THE GAME.
...MY "LITTLE MARCH HARE."

MY EARS ARE RINGING
IS THE PRESSURE CHANGING?
MAYBE IT'S JUST MY IMAGINATION.
?
THIS PLACE IS AMAZING!
AILEEN-CHAN SAID HER CORPORATION'S SUPERCOMPUTER GOVERNED EVERYTHING.
THAT'S GOT TO BE LIKE A RED FLAG FOR HACKERS.

LET'S DESTROY THIS AMUSEMENT PARK.
LET'S PLAY!
LET'S DESTROY...

A RABBIT?
SUN FLOWER
WHAT'S THAT?
RIGHT NEXT TO THE FERRIS WHEEL'S SECURITY SYSTEM...
DANGER
?!
THE SUNFLOWER STOPPED!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
HEY!

EVERYTHING RUNS THROUGH A GOVERNMENT MILITARY HUB BEFORE REACHING THE CORE SERVER.
I WONDER IF ANYBODY WOULD BE ABLE TO CRACK THE NETWORK...
I'M SURE EVERYTHING IS ENCRYPTED
IT'S DEFINITELY A GOOD WAY OF PREVENTING ANY CARELESS INTERFERENCE FROM THE OUTSIDE SOURCES
...ESPECIALLY SINCE THERE ARE SEVERAL DEFENSE MECHANISMS IN PLACE.
ON THE OTHER HAND...
HACKERS ALWAYS SEEM TO BE ONE STEP AHEAD.

HURRY UP AND DO SOMETHING!
I'M SCARED!
HAVE THE SYSTEMS BEEN HACKED FROM THE OUTSIDE?
MAYBE A COMPUTER VIRUS?
SOMEONE IS DEFINITELY MESSING WITH THE RIDES!
HOW COULD ANYBODY BE SO RECKLESS...
...STOPPING A RIDE LIKE THAT?
WHAT IF SOMEONE GOT HURT?
AND AILEEN-CHAN WAS HAVING SO MUCH FUN...
?!
IF THE GUESTS PANIC, PEOPLE COULD GET HURT.
I NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.
IS THIS SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN?
THE PARK HASN'T ANNOUNCED ANYTHING
THAT RABBIT IS MOVING!
WHAT'S HAPPENING?
DANGER
キュウ...
Kyaaaaaa!
WHAT'S GOING ON?

...RABBIT-SAN!
LET'S GO...
THE MAIN FEATURE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER.
THAT WAS JUST THE TRAILER.
ヒロオ
HEY, IT'S STARTING BACK UP!
Aaaaah!!
Finally!
WHAT?!

ALICE
A WHITE RABBIT WITH A POCKET WATCH. ALICE IN WONDERLAND?
HEH!
TEE HEE!

FLANE!
TEREZART
YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.
THAT STUPID SHAKE I HATE MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD.
THE ROLLER-COASTER
I CAN'T LOCK OFF THE NETWORK!
THEY MUST BE PANICKING BACK AT THE ZAIBATSU.
AT LEAST I'VE FIGURED OUT THAT THE HACKER IS SOMEWHERE IN THE PARK...

HOW COULD THEY HAVE NEUTRALIZED OUR VIRUS SO QUICKLY?
WHAT SHALL WE DO NOW, RABBIT-SAN?
SOMEONE'S INTERRUPTED THE GAME!
TEE HEE...
TEE HEE HEE...
I SEE.
WE'D BETTER HURRY UP AND START PLAN B.

OH, NO!
THE INDOOR ROLLER-COASTER!
BUT A COUNTDOWN TO WHAT?
THERE'S A COUNTDOWN THIS TIME.
THIS IS NEW.
THE RIDE ITSELF SEEMS TO BE OPERATING NORMALLY.
!!
THERE MIGHT BE A CLUE IN THERE.
I'LL PULL UP THE INTERIOR SCHEMATICS FOR THE TEREZART.

I'M SURE HE'S COVERING HIS TRACKS, THOUGH.
MAYBE THE SECURITY CAMERAS HAVE PICKED SOMETHING UP.
.....
I NEED TO FIND HIM BEFORE SOMEONE GETS HURT.
I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.
HE'S ON THE MOVE AGAIN!
THE WHITE RABBIT!
!?

IT'LL BE THE LAST THING THEY EVER SEE.
ALL THOSE PEOPLE WILL START HALLUCINATING AS THE OXYGEN RUNS OUT.
THEY'LL SEE WONDERLAND!
ANYBODY WHO WANTS TO RIDE A THING LIKE THAT...
MY VIRUS IS TOO CLEVER FOR THAT.
THEY WON'T EVEN REALIZE WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THEM.
THIS ISN'T A GAME.
?
WHAT WAS THAT?

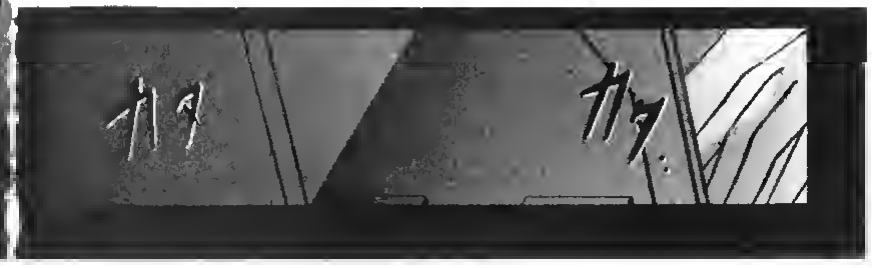
UH OH.
OH MY GOD!
ALL OF THE AIR DUCTS IN THE TEREZART ARE CLOSING!
THE OXYGEN WILL RUN OUT LITTLE BY LITTLE.
TEE HEE!
THAT'S RIGHT...
COMBINED WITH THE RIDE'S G FORCES...

GAH!
STUPID LITTLE GNAT!
WHAT?!
SOMEONE'S REWRITING MY CODE?!
JERK!
YOU HATE ALL THE FUN RIDES.
YOU ALWAYS PRETEND TO BE IN PAIN.
IT MAKES PEOPLE NOT WANT TO GO TO THE PARK WITH YOU.
STOP FOLLOWING US! WE CAN'T HAVE ANY FUN WITH YOU AROUND!
STOP INTERFERING!
WHY...
AH...
.....
I'VE GOT TO STOP ALICE!
NO! I NEED TO DEAL WITH THE HACKER.
I HAVE TO STOP THE WHITE RABBIT!
MAYBE THE SECURITY CAMERAS WILL FIND HER SOON.
I CAN OPEN UP THE AIR DUCTS TO BUY SOME TIME.
I'LL REWRITE THE DATA ALICE IS SENDING TO THE SYSTEM AS THE CODE ROLLS IN.
カタ
カタ
カタ..

I'M NOT GOING TO MAKE IT!
THE COUNTDOWN HAS ALREADY STARTED.
MY FINGERS AREN'T FAST ENOUGH!
THAT GIRL! THE ONE I JUST BUMPED INTO..
I DON'T REALLY WANT TO DO THESE THINGS!
I JUST WANTED TO GO TO A THEME PARK WITH MY FRIENDS!
NO!
I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS!

THEY SAY SUCH MEAN THINGS!
I... I...
You have no reason to hesitate, Alice. Press the button.
Everyone in this park belongs to us. They are our toys.
WHITE RABBIT

Press the button.



HELP ME.
PLEASE ..
STOP THE WHITE RABBIT!
PLEASE!
SO, YOU'RE ALICE.
JUST A KID.
MANIPULATED BY A PROGRAM CALLED THE WHITE RABBIT...
THERE ARE EVIL PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD, PEOPLE WHO PUT THEIR VICTIMS UNDER SPELLS.
HE SAID THEIR VICTIMS ARE "INFECTED."
I HAD A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE, A LONG TIME AGO...
THAT'S WHAT SENSEI SAID.
THAT'S WHY I HAVE THIS JOB NOW, WORKING WITH SENSEI
AS A SECRET CHASER.
IT'S ALL OVER, ALICE
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HAVE BAD DREAMS ANY MORE

?!
THE SYSTEMS ARE BACK ONLINE!
ALL OF THE AIR DUCTS IN THE TEREZART ARE FULLY OPEN.
まぁ、
THERE'S SOMEONE OUT THERE CAPABLE OF CASTING A SPELL THROUGH THE INTERNET.
I SWEAR!
THAT WAS CLOSE.
BUT WHO?
A VIRUS LIKE THE WHITE RABBIT.
POKE POKE

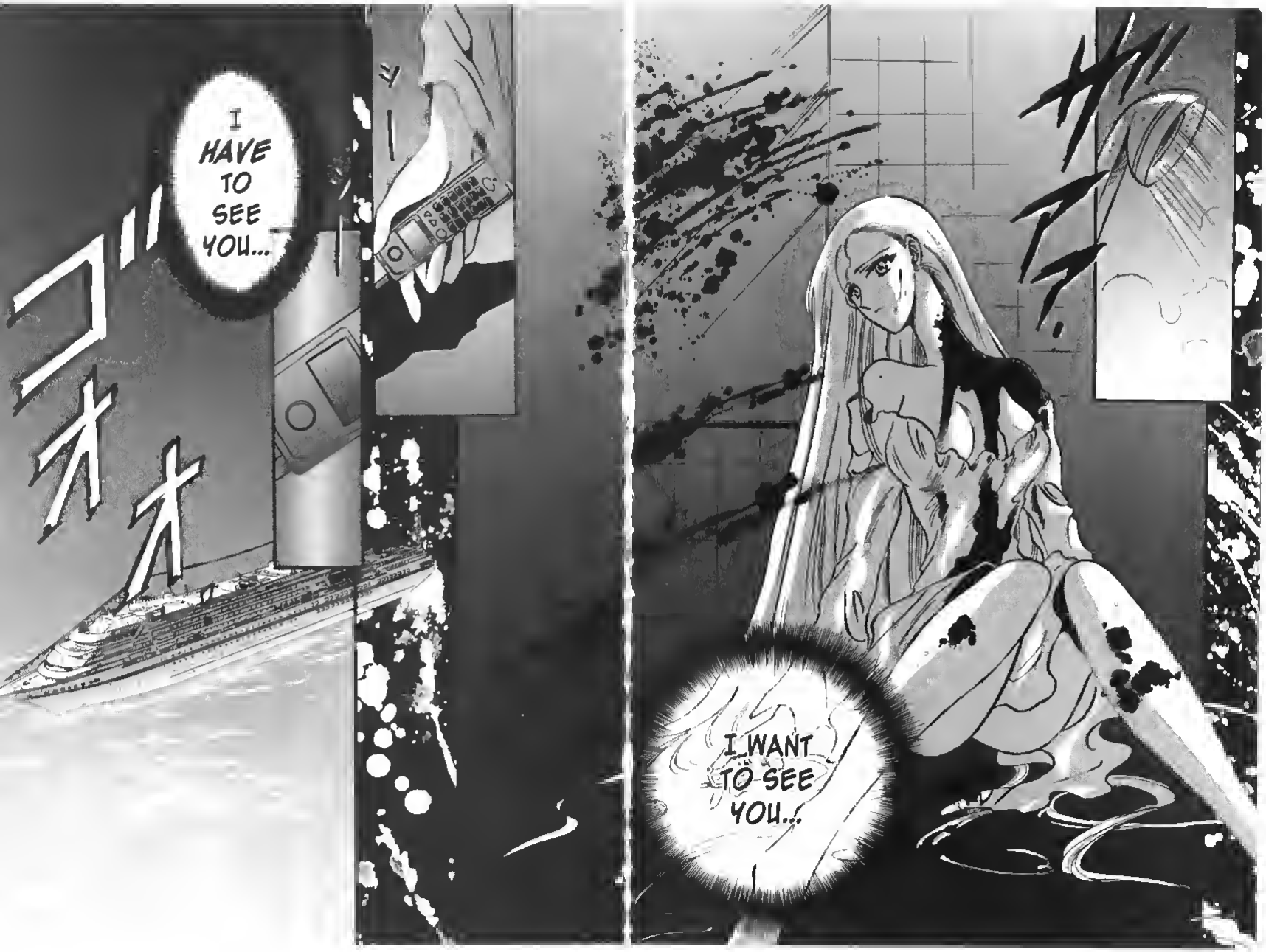
I PROMISE.
I RELEASE YOU...
FROM THE SPELL...
BANG
IT'S GONE!

CASE:7
THE WHITE RABBIT HIDES IN A HOLE...
Merry X'mas
YES!

UM...
WE JUST MET A MINUTE AGO.
AILEEN-CHAN?
HEY, NANAMI-KUN! WHO'S THIS?
I CAN'T LEAVE YOU ALONE FOR A MINUTE!
ALICE ISN'T VERY GOOD WITH FAST RIDES, EITHER.
RIGHT?
WE HUNG OUT.
I SEE.
FOR YOUR SAKE.
ANYWAY, I'M POOPED.
LET'S STICK WITH THE KIDDY RIDES.
DO YOU WANT TO JOIN US, ALICE?
IF YOU SAY SO.

SECRET CHASER 2

TAMAYO AKIYAMA


I HAVE TO SEE YOU...
I WANT TO SEE YOU...

...I'M SORRY.
JUST ACT NORMALLY. THIS IS A SERIOUS PICTURE.
ACT LIKE A HEROINE.
GOT IT?
HRM
MAYBE YOU'RE TIRED IT /S YOUR FIRST DAY ON A LOCATION SHOOT AFTER ALL
LET'S JUST CALL IT A DAY.
IT'S NOT LIKE THE REST OF THE CAST HAS BOTHERED TO SHOW UP.
AH!
SPEAK OF THE DEVIL!
EVERYONE IS A STEP BEHIND YOU, KEI-CHAN.
ANYWAY.
I NEED YOU TO BE GREAT TOMORROW
SERIOUSLY
What?!
YOU'RE SAYING THERE'S A VAMPIRE ABOARD THIS SHIP?
OH MY! OH MY!!
ごくっ
...KEI-CHAN.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO YELL SO LOUD...
...CUT!

HEY! I'M STANDING RIGHT HERE YOU KNOW!
TSUKISHIRO-KUN.
HEY, ARE YOU LISTENING?
SHE'S GOING TO PULL DOWN THE WHOLE PRODUCTION!
THE TABLOIDS SAY SHE'S GOING TO BE AWFUL!
V'KNOW, TSUKISHIRO-KUN?
YOU WERE TOTALLY BAWES-DROPPING!
OH MY GOD.

Wake up, Usagi.
AWFUL!
WHY DID I AGREE TO DO THIS TERRIBLE MOVIE?
I GUESS IT WOULD BE DIFFERENT IF I ACTUALLY KNEW HOW TO ACT.
WHAT WAS I THINKING?
ME GETTING CAST IS THE PUNCHLINE TO A JOKE I HAVEN'T BEEN TOLD.
I THOUGHT IT WAS A CASTING!
BEING CHASED BY A VAMPIRE ON A CRUISE SHIP
AND ANYWAY, THE SCRIPT IS ABOUT THREE GIRLS...
WILL SHE HANDLE IT OR HAVE A MELT-DOWN?
A POP IDOL'S FIRST MOVIE IS A CRAPSHOOT.

I'M SUCH AN IDIOT!
.....
I STILL HAVEN'T...
IT'S GONNA LOOK LIKE I HAVEN'T TOTALLY FORGOTTEN ABOUT HIM YET...
I GUESS I'D BETTER STEEL MYSELF FOR OUR SCENE TOGETHER
SIGH.
TABLOID FRENZY!
I CAN SEE THE HEADLINES ALREADY "FORMER LOVES CAUGHT ON FILM."
POP IDOL MORINO IZUMI -- STAGE NAME KEI! AND OVER HERE WE HAVE HOT TEEN STAR TSUKISHIRO KYO!
IT'LL BE A HUGE SCOOP!
HELLO.
KEI-CHAN.
SHI...
SHINOZAKI?!
WHA... WHA?
YOU LOOK CUTE WITH A PONYTAIL
.....
KYO...
スイ
WHAT'S UP?
HEY, WAIT FOR US, TSUKISHIRO-KUN!
DON'T LEAVE US!

PHEWW...
IT JUST GETS WORSE.
IS THIS SOME KIND OF JOKE?
A CAMEO?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
THE SHIP IS OFF LIMITS TO ANYONE NOT INVOLVED WITH THE FILM!
I'M HERE TO SHOOT MY CAMEO!
OH, SHUSH.
AND ANYWAY...
.....
WHAT?

I GUESS IT'S ONLY NATURAL.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE WE BROKE UP... AFTER ALL...
KYO...
HE SEEMS TO HAVE CHANGED AGAIN.
ボッ
!!
GO AWAY!
WHY DOES SOMEONE'S FACE POP INTO MY HEAD AT A TIME LIKE THIS?
KYO WAS...
I'M SURE HE'S STILL IN LOVE WITH HIS SISTER.
WHAT?!
I DEFINITELY HEARD SOMETHING!
WHO'S THERE?
IS SOMEBODY THERE?!

EVERYONE'S SAYING YOU'RE A NATURAL ACTRESS.
YOU'RE GOING TO BE GREAT AT TOMORROW'S SHOOT!
I GUESS A VAMPIRE MOVIE NEEDS A PRIEST.
BUT WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE HIM? GIVE ME A BREAK!
MAYBE HE [illegible] SOMEONE IN THE BUSINESS
ANYWAY...
AS LONG AS HE'S NOT HERE AS A SECRET CHASER I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER
STILL... SOMETHING SMELLS FISHY.
.....

KYAAAAAAAAA!!
SOMEBODY! HELP!
K--
K--
SHE'S DEAD?!
YOU PEEPING...
...TOM
THIS ISN'T FUNNY, SHINOZAKI!
I KNEW IT...
?!

OH, NO!
HOW COULD THIS...
WHAT HAPPENED?
?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU CAN'T INTERFERE WITH A CRIME SCENE BEFORE THE COPS GET HERE!
HEY!!
HEY, YOU!

?!
WHAT IS IT?
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
AAAAGHH!
YUMA-CHAN!
KYO!!
.....

I'M SURE WE ALL KNOW WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE.
KYO!!
A VAM-PIRE?
I'D BETTER FIND HER.
YUMA-CHAN WAS PLAYING OUR VAMPIRE'S FIRST VICTIM
IT MAY BE A COINCIDENCE, BUT I IMAGINE THIS WAS METICULOUSLY PLANNED
HOLD ON! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS TO GO ANYWHERE ALONE!
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, WHERE'S THE GIRL PLAYING THE SECOND VICTIM?
UM...
THE CRIME MIRRORS THE MOVIE.

...
HMM...
WE'RE DEALING WITH SOME SORT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PERVERSION
THE KILLER SEVERED THE VICTIM'S CAROTID ARTERY WITH HIS TEETH
HE'S A SOCIOPATH
THE PERPETRATOR MAY HAVE EATEN HER FLESH. OR HE COULD BE A COLLECTOR.
FOR THE TIME BEING...

COME ON...
KYO...
HANG ON.
SHOULD WE LEAVE THEM ALONE TOGETHER WITH A KILLER ON THE LOOSE?
...PRO-BABLY.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "PROBABLY?"
EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS MURDER WAS CAREFULLY ORCHESTRATED.
I DON'T THINK OUR FRIENDS HAVE ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT
AS LONG AS WE'RE MILLING AROUND OUT HERE
LOCATION IS VERY IMPORTANT TO HIM

THAT'S ABSOLUTELY
THE PERPETRATOR WILL USE ANY MEANS NECESSARY TO FULFILL HIS OBJEC-TIVES
YOU'RE NO ORDINARY PRIEST.
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
AH, EXCUSE ME.
I MOON-LIGHT AS A PRIVATE DETECTIVE.
I TACKLE BOTH LITERAL AND METAPHYSICAL MYSTERIES
HUH?
IS THIS REALLY THE TIME?
MY NAME IS SHINOZAKI.
MORE IMPORTANTLY, I CAN'T BEAR TO LET THAT GIRL GO ON STANDING THERE NAKED
OKAY.
COME ON.
BE SO KIND AS TO LET HER CHANGE IN THE NEXT ROOM.
BUT KEEP AN EYE ON HER. IT'S DANGEROUS.
KEI...
WHA...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING...
KYO?!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WHY NOW...
YOU BROKE UP WITH ME BACK THEN... AFTER ALL...
...AFTER ALL...
YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH YOUR SISTER!
NO!

NOW.
KEI-CHAN AND THE OTHER ACTRESSES ARE THE LIKELIEST TARGETS.
THE REST OF THE PRODUCTION CREW IS MEN.
SO IS THE REST OF THE CAST, ASIDE FROM THOSE THREE WOMEN
WITH ONLY A HANDFUL OF WOMEN ON BOARD, WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TOO MUCH TROUBLE KEEPING THINGS SECURE
SO... YOU'RE SAYING THE KILLER IS ONLY AFTER WOMEN.
YOU COULD BE MAKING THIS UP FOR ALL WE KNOW.
WHAT IF THE KILLER JUST HAD A GRUDGE WITH YUMA-CHAN AND DOESN'T CARE ABOUT ANYONE ELSE?
THAT'S ALSO A POSSIBILITY.
HEY, COME ON!

IT'S MAKI-CHAN!
IN THE DECK POOL!
?!
...DEAD
NEE-SAN IS...
.....
WHAT?
LISTEN, BUDDY!
YOU'RE MAKING EVERYONE NERVOUS WITH THIS WILD SPECULATION!
IT MAY BE MORE THAN CONJECTURE
FOR EXAMPLE...
WHAT?
THE KILLER APPEARS TO HAVE MODIFIED HIS TEETH TO FIT THE PART
THAT POINTS TO DELIBERATION
OH MY GOD! SOMETHING'S HAPPENED!

WE NEED TO HURRY.
I WAS GOING TO LET YOU CATCH UP A WHILE LONGER, BUT THE SITUATION HAS CHANGED.
OH, NO! DID SHINOZAKI SEE...
IT'S A MISUNDER-STANDING!
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!
WHAT?
IT'S TERRIBLE, TSUKISHIRO-KUN!
ONE OF THE OTHER ACTRESSES WAS FOUND DEAD IN THE POOL!
KYO!
.....!!
WHAT?!

WHY?
KEI.
RIGHT NOW...
I NEED YOU...
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO BROKE UP WITH ME...
?!
I...
KYO, YOU—
I LOVE YOU...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR TEETH?
...WE COULD USE YOU IN THE OTHER ROOM.
I'M SORRY TO INTERRUPT THIS REUNION, BUT...

WHAT IS THAT?
YOU FIGURED THAT OUT FROM THE THING IN YOUR HAND?
THIS IS EASILY DEDUCED FROM THE WOUND MARKINGS
HONED LIKE A KNIFE.
I'LL NEED TO ANALYZE THE COMPOUND TO DISCOVER MORE
A RARE TYPE USED BY PROFESSIONALS
CEMENT.
AND THAT LEADS TO ANOTHER CLUE.
BUT COMBINE THOSE TWO CLUES! TEETH AND CEMENT.
SOMEONE HERE IS BLEEDING AT THE MOUTH
AND WHAT DOES THAT SUGGEST? IT MEANS THAT THE KILLER CAN LOSE THEM IF HE BITES DOWN TOO HARD AT THE WRONG ANGLE
THAT MEANS WE'RE ALSO DEALING WITH FALSE TEETH.
WE'RE LIKELY DEALING WITH DENTAL ADHESIVE!

WHAT'S GOING ON?
THIS WAS A COMMISSION, WASN'T IT!
ARE YOU LISTENING? HEY!
SHINOZAKI, YOU MUST HAVE PREDICTED THIS WHEN YOU CAME ON BOARD.
NOT HER, TOO...
WE KNOW THIS...
...THE KILLER FILED DOWN HIS OWN TEETH TO CREATE A WEAPON FOR THESE CRIMES.
OR POSSIBLY...
WE'RE LOOKING AT AN ELABORATE SET OF FALSE TEETH.

WAAAHHH!
FIRE!
IT SMELLS LIKE GAS.
EVERYONE, GET OUT OF HERE!
HURRY!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.
KYO WOULD NEVER DO HURT ANYONE.
HE'S SO GENTLE.
I RECEIVED A CALL TWO DAYS AGO.
IT WAS A COMMISSION.
TSUKISHIRO KYO.
HE KILLED HIS SISTER AND THEN BOARDED THIS SHIP.
JUST NOW...
I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE!
OW!
WHEN KYO KISSED ME...
I CUT MY TONGUE.
KYO.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR TEETH?
OH MY GOD!
KYO?!

THE POP IDOL KOBAYASHI KEI. YOU!
!!
!!
YOU ARE GRAVELY ILL, KYO.
I'LL SHARE MY BLOOD WITH YOU FOREVER.
YOU REQUIRE BLOOD TO STAY ALIVE AND YOUR SISTER IS THE CLOSEST MATCH.
YOU MUST DRINK IT OR DIE.
WE'LL ALWAYS BE TO-GETHER.

HE WAS INFECTED BY A SPELL.
A SPELL CAST BY NONE OTHER THAN...
THAT SISTER IS OUR CLIENT.
SHE MANAGED TO CONTACT ME DESPITE SUFFERING A MORTAL WOUND. KYO TORE A HOLE IN HER NECK, BUT DIDN'T STAY TO MAKE SURE SHE DIED.
KEI-CHAN.
TSUKISHIRO FUYUNA!
I SUSPECT THAT THE FINAL VICTIM WOULD HAVE BEEN HIS PRIME TARGET.
AS A SECRET CHASER.

BUT YOU DIDN'T WANT THAT, DID YOU? YOU FOUGHT TO GET FREE.
AND SO YOU KILLED YOUR OWN SISTER.
YOUR SISTER WAS CONSUMED BY A FORBIDDEN LOVE.
AND SO SHE CAST A SPELL TO BIND YOU TO HER FOREVER.
BUT THE SPELL ITSELF WAS TOO POWERFUL.
IT WAS LIKE AN INFECTION. WITHOUT YOUR SISTER TO REIGN IT IN, YOU LOST CONTROL.
YOU TRIED TO DRINK OTHERS' BLOOD TO QUENCH THE THIRST, BUT IT DIDN'T WORK
AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO KEEP KILLING UNTIL YOU FIND A COMPATIBLE BLOOD TYPE.
I MUST RELEASE YOU FROM THE SPELL.
SHINOZAKI GAVE ME THE POWER TO FREE YOU.
BUT... I CAN'T DO THIS!

KEI...
SO, THAT'S IT. IT WAS ALL DOWN TO YOUR SISTER.
IF YOU ARE NO LONGER HERE...
WHY DO I STILL SUFFER?
SISTER!
I LOVE YOU, KYO!

IF YOU CAN SAVE ME FROM THIS, PLEASE END IT NOW.
MY FINAL WISH IS THAT YOU BELIEVE ONE THING.
IT WAS DRIVING ME MAD. I HAD TO FIND ANOTHER WAY!
SO I REPLACED MY TEETH WITH FANGS.
I'M A MURDERER!
THE REAL REASON I RAN AWAY, EVEN THOUGH IT KILLED MY SISTER...

I CAN'T LET YOU DIE, KYO.
NOT YOU.
MY POWER...
THE SIGN OF THE CROSS...
YOU WERE THE FIRST.
AFTER ALL...
I CAN ONLY RELEASE THE INFECTED THROUGH DEATH.
I CAN'T DO IT!
MY FIRST LOVE.
?!
YOU WERE THE FIRST PERSON TO BE NICE TO ME WHEN I BROKE INTO THE INDUSTRY.
I COULD FEEL THE SKIN IN MY MOUTH AS I DRANK.
AND THEN I WOULD DRINK.
I WOULD TEAR THROUGH MY SISTER'S FLESH WITH MY TEETH.

... NEVER
THIS POWER I RECEIVED FROM SHINOZAKI...
I SHALL NEVER REGRET IT
NEVER...
I KNEW YOU WOULD BE ON THIS SHOOT.
I HAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
I LOVE YOU, KEI.
CASE:0

SECRET CHASER 2

TAMAYO AKIYAMA

Chapter 6

The Secret Mission

WHY...?
KYAAAAAAAA!!
AH...
AH...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?
WHAT AM I DOING?
I...

AND THAT IS ALL THE INFORMATION WE HAVE ON THIS CASE.
I CAME HERE TODAY BECAUSE I WANTED TO HEAR YOUR OPINION ON THIS
SHINOZAKI?
SO, WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT?
ETROPOLITAN POLICE DETECTIVE FIRS
UNIT: DETECTIVE YOSHIDA KAZUYA

I SEE.
YOSHIDA-KUN.
WHAT CAN I POSSIBLY TELL YOU?
YOU SAID THE INVESTIGATION IS OVER.
I DIDN'T SAY IT WAS OVER.
NOTHING ABOUT THIS CASE MAKES SENSE!
TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, THIS IS THE FOURTH SUCH CASE.
ALL FOUR APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SUICIDES, BUT.
THERE'S A STRANGE PATTERN TO THESE CASES.
IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT ME TO SAY?
EXACTLY!
TWO CASES SMACKS OF COINCIDENCE BUT FOUR IS OBVIOUSLY SOMETHING LARGER. COPYCATS?
NOTHING ADDS UP.
THE TIMING IS TOO MUCH TO BE A COINCIDENCE ALL OF THE VICTIMS EXPIRED AT ONE IN THE MORNING!
THE NEWS PICKED IT UP AFTER THE THIRD KILLING.
EACH MURDER OCCURRED ON A WEDNESDAY.
PROBABLY LOVERS. BUT EACH OF THE MEN COMMITTED SUICIDE.
THE PERPETRATORS WERE MALE.
CERTAIN EVIDENCE WHICH PROVED INEXPLICABLE TO OUR OWN DETECTIVES.
THERE ARE MORE... DRAMATIC DETAILS WE HAVEN'T MADE PUBLIC.
I DON'T THINK SO.
THE PLANTS, FOR EXAMPLE.

EACH OF THE MEN HAD THE SAME TYPE OF HOUSEPLANT.
AND NOT EXACTLY A NORMAL SPECIMEN, EITHER.
WHAT A WEIRD PLANT
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.
COME TO THINK OF IT, KEI-CHAN'S BEEN SAYING THAT MY ROOM IS BORING
SHE SAYS I SHOULD GET A PLANT...
OH.
THIS THING IS SO COLORFUL. I WONDER WHAT TYPE IT IS.
?!
IT SMELLS LIKE FRUIT AND FLOWERS!

I'LL HAVE TO GOOGLE IT BACK AT THE CHURCH.
YOU HELD BACK CERTAIN INFORMATION.
THAT RULES OUT MASS HYSTERIA OR COPYCATS.
DO YOU THINK THERE COULD BE SOME SORT OF .ORGANIZED DISTRIBUTION BEHIND THESE PLANTS?

!!
COULD I HAVE ONE OF THOSE?
OH, I'M SORRY.
THANKS!
WHAT'S THIS PLANT CALLED?
IT'S VERY PRETTY.
HUH?

THE PLANTS THEM-SELVES
I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY PHOTOGRAPHS.
WELL...
WE'RE MISSING EVIDENCE.
WHAT?
I'LL MAKE SOME COFFEE.
OH, YOSHIDA-SAN! YOU'VE COME TO VISIT.
SENSEI, I'M BACK FROM MY ERRANDS!
I FORGOT TO BRING THEM FROM THE STATION
OH, NO!

IT'S A SOUTH AMERICAN SPECIES, BUT BEYOND THAT WE'RE TAPPED OUT.
AS NEAR AS WE CAN TELL, THE PLANTS WERE BOUGHT AT AN OUTDOOR MARKET.
PERHAPS THESE MEN WERE IMPORTING DRUGS THROUGH THESE ROUTES.
WE THOUGHT OF THAT.
THAT IN ITSELF DOESN'T LEAD TO MURDER
WE ASSUME THEY WERE SMUGGLED INTO THE COUNTRY.
THE AUTOPSIES DIDN'T REVEAL ANY SIGN OF DRUGS
AS YOU SAID, WE SUSPECT ORGANIZED CRIME IS INVOLVED SOMEHOW.
AT LEAST ON THE SMUGGLING SIDE.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
COME ON.

STINGY, ARROGANT AND INSULTING!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS WORLD.
AND HE'S REALLY A CLERGYMAN?
WHAT A SNOB! HE THINKS HE'S SO MUCH BETTER THAN THE REST OF US!
ドカ
ドカ
UM. HI.
YOU'RE SHINOZAKI'S OTHER ASSISTANT, KEI...
AND ALSO A POP IDOL!
HE'S ALSO A PERVERT WITH A STUFFED ANIMAL FETISH
DETECTIVE YOSHIDA-SAN.
KOBAYASHI KEI.
IF YOU WANT TO COMPLAIN ABOUT SENSEI THEN I'LL GLADLY LISTEN ANYTIME

YOSNIDA.
THANK YOU, NANAMI-KUN...
...BUT I'M ON MY WAY OUT THE DOOR.
ALSO...
YOUR SMUGGLING RING THEORY?
WHAT A JERK!
NEXT TIME YOU NEED MY HELP, I SUGGEST BRINGING ALL THE EVIDENCE. AND CONFECTIONARY GIFTS, AS WELL.
ONCE YOU'VE DECIDED THAT YOU'RE THEORY ISN'T AN EMBARRASSMENT, THEN YOU CAN TELL IT TO ME
...WRITE IT DOWN IN REPORT FORM 10 TIMES, THEN READ IT ALOUD 10 TIMES
IF YOU WISH TO COME UP WITH ANOTHER BASELESS HYPOTHESIS.
SMUGGLING RINGS AREN'T USUALLY SO DRAMATIC.
WE'RE LOOKING AT MEN KILLING THEIR LOVERS.
SERIOUSLY?
HE'S ALWAYS IN A HURRY.
OH BOY!
AND I'LL BRING SOME SNACKS, TOO, SO HURRY UP AND THINK ABOUT IT!!
I'LL BE BACK TOMORROW!
SLAM!
I'M TELLING YOU THIS FOR YOUR OWN SAKE.
PLEASE TAKE IT TO HEART

?!
MAYBE HE'S IN THE KITCHEN?
BOO!
NANAMI-KUN!
I WENT AND BOUGHT THAT THING WE TALKED ABOUT
HE'S ALREADY GOT ONE?
HUH?
I'LL JUST LEAVE IT HERE, THEN.
OH, WELL.
IT'S REALLY PRETTY. I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.
I GUESS THEY CAN SIT NEXT TO EACH OTHER.
HE'S SO IMPATIENT!

CALL ME ANYTIME.
I'M SURE YOU DO.
IN THAT CASE WE SHOULD HAVE DINNER ONE NIGHT. I'VE GOT A LIST.
... IS RED.
TELL HIM, THE PLANT IN QUESTION...
SURE
CAN YOU RELAY A MESSAGE FOR ME?
OH, I FORGOT TO TELL SHINOZAKI SOMETHING!
RED. RIGHT.
OKAY.
...?

YOU'D BETTER GET THIS PLANT OUT OF HERE.
IT SMELLS TERRIBLE. I'M SURE IT'S BAD FOR YOU!
KEI-CHAN!
OH, YOU'RE BACK.
!!
I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE, NANAMI-KUN!!
I THINK IT SMELLS GREAT!
?
THAT'S NOT TRUE...
OR JUST THROW IT AWAY.
WHAT?!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? IT SMELLS SO HORRIBLE.
IT'S GOING TO STINK UP THE WHOLE BUILDING IF YOU DON'T MOVE IT!
THE GARBAGE MEN COME TOMORROW.
YOU SHOULD RETURN IT TO THE STORE.

THE RED IS SO DEEP.
IT'S ALMOST HYPNOTIC...
?!
WHY WOULD NANAMI-KUN HAVE SUCH AN...
UGH...
A LITTLE TOO FRUITY.
I'M GONNA BE SICK!
?!
IT SMELLS FUNNY.

WHAT?
YOU'RE ACTING STRANGE TODAY, KEI-CHAN.
I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
I'M NOT WEIRD!
YOU'RE THE ONE ACTING WEIRD, NANAMI-KUN YOU THINK THAT HORRIBLE STENCH SMELLS NICE
YOU'RE SAYING THINGS THAT MAKE NO SENSE...
I'M SORRY, BUT I'M GOING TO HAVE TO ASK YOU TO LEAVE.
NANAMI-KUN...
I'M GOING TO GET ANGRY IN A MINUTE.
I'M NEVER GOING TO COME INTO THIS ROOM AGAIN!
I GET IT!
AND BESIDES...
ALL...
ALL RIGHT!
IF YOU LOVE THAT PLANT SO MUCH YOU CAN BE WITH IT FOREVER!!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS! THIS IS WHAT I GET FOR WORRYING ABOUT YOU!!

AND IF THAT DOESN'T WORK...
KEI-CHAN!
WHY DO YOU SAY SUCH HORRIBLE THINGS?
WHAT?!
VICIOUS.
YOU'RE ACTING WEIRD.
HOW CAN YOU THROW AWAY A LIVING THING?
PLANTS ARE ALIVE

... SUCH A NICE FRAGRANCE...
... SUCH A SWEET BOUQUET...
SUCH A...

I HATE YOU, NANAMI-KUN!
.....
KEI-CHAN'S ACTING SO WEIRD
WHAT HAPPENED?
WHY CAN'T SHE APPRECIATE THIS LOVELY SMELL?
KEI-CHAN'S AN IDIOT.
OH, WELL.

HEY!
KEI-CHAN!!
SHINOZAKI'S STUDY IS DOWN THAT HALL. JUST POUND ON THE DOOR.
IT...IT'S NOTHING!!
I'M GOING UPSTAIRS.
WHAT ARE YOU BABBLING ABOUT SO LOUDLY AT THIS HOUR, YOSHIDA-KUN?
SHE'S USUALLY SO CHEERFUL.
I HAVE A HARD TIME BELIEVING NANAMI-KUN WOULD MAKE A GIRL CRY.
THERE'S NO TIME FOR THAT. I'M IN A HURRY!
LOOK AT THE TIME.
I THOUGHT YOU PROMISED TO COME BACK AGAIN TOMORROW..
OH, GOOD. YOU'RE AWAKE!

IS SHINOZAKI HERE?!
HELLO?
I'VE NEVER SEEN NANAMI-KUN SO ANGRY
HOW DID THINGS BLOW UP LIKE THIS?
WHAT A JERK!
HE'S ACTING LIKE I WAS GIVING HIM A HARD TIME ON PURPOSE.
KEI-CHAN.
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM AT ALL TODAY
HE HASN'T COME OUT ALL EVENING. HE COULD BE ASLEEP FOR ALL I KNOW.
SHINOZAKI IS IN HIS STUDY.
WHAT?
DID SHINOZAKI MAKE YOU CRY AGAIN?
WHAT WRONG WITH YOUR EYES?
WHAT ABOUT NANAMI-KUN?
NO. IT'S NANAMI-KUN...
THEY'RE BURNING RED.

IT'S ALREADY HALF PAST MIDNIGHT.
IN THIRTY MINUTES IT'LL BE WEDNESDAY.
.....
I'M SURE...
I'VE NEVER SEEN NANAMI-KUN SO ANGRY!
I SHOULD APOLOGIZE.
UGH!
I'M SURE HE HAD SOMETHING ELSE ON HIS MIND.
I'M THE ONE WHO STARTED THIS MAYBE I SPOKE TOO HARSHLY.
ぱっ
!!
IS THAT THE PLANT?
IT SMELLS EVEN WORSE!
NA...
NANAMI-KUN?

SO THIS IS THE PLANT IN QUESTION.
I SEE. IT DEFINITELY IS A STRANGE SPECIES.
THE COLORING IS ESPECIALLY PECULIAR
SO NOW YOU'VE SEEN EVERYTHING.
IT'S ALMOST ONE.
WHAT'S YOUR THEORY?
SOMEONE ELSE MIGHT DIE WHILE WE'RE STANDING HERE.
LOOK, YOU!
IF YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING, ANYTHING...
UM. I WAS DOZING OFF THERE UNTIL A MINUTE AGO.
I'M SURE THAT WOULD MAKE FOR A VERY INTERESTING INVESTIGATION
LET US IMAGINE THIS PLANT IS THE CULPRIT. PERHAPS IT GROWS LIMBS EVERY WEDNESDAY AND SLAUGHTERS ITS OWNERS.
THIS PLANT..
DON'T GET EXCITED, YOSHIDA-KUN.
WHA..?
WHAT THE HELL...
...IS WRONG WITH YOU?

.....
WHO?
WHO IS IT?
WHO'S TRYING ...
WHO'S TRYING TO GET BETWEEN US?!
チッ
チッ

THAT HORRIBLE SMELL...
I BET IT'S SOME SORT OF MIND-CONTROL CHEMICAL!
COME ON, NANAMI-KUN!
WHAT WAS THAT SOUND?!
WHA...
?!
I'M NOT GOING TO LET ANYONE GET BE-TWEEN US.
WHEN WILL IT GET THROUGH YOUR THICK SKULL...
.....
WAKE UP ALREADY!
THAT PLANT IS BEHIND ALL OF THIS!
SNAP OUT OF IT, NANAMI-KUN!

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON HERE?
KNOCK IT OFF, NANAMI-KUN!
?!
NOBODY.
NOT EVEN YOU!
KYAAAAAAA!!
NANAMI--KUN!
STOP!!
STOP IT!!!

OH DEAR.
HAVE YOU BECOME JEALOUS OF THIS PLANT?
I IMAGINE THIS PLANT IS FEMALE.
THIS WAS A CLOSER CALL THAN USUAL
A FEMALE PLANT?

AH...
THE PLANT MUST HAVE POSSESSED NANAMI-KUN AND COME BACK HERE
WHAT AN INTRIGUING COINCIDENCE!
AND NOW YOSHIDA-KUN HAS FALLEN VICTIM TO THE PLANT'S TOXIN AS WELL.
THEN BEFORE HE CAUSES ANY DAMAGE...
WHAT...
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

PLANTS LACK BRAINS AND SENSE ORGANS.
BUT SOMEHOW THIS PLANT HAS THE ABILITY TO DETECT HUMANS AND INFLUENCE THEM.
THIS IS A NEW SPECIES FROM THE RAINFOREST
IT MUST HAVE HAD SOME SORT OF CHEMICAL DEFENSE UNKNOWN TO BOTANISTS.
SOME PLANTS CAN ATTRACT INSECTS THAT PREY ON HERBIVOROUS BUGS AS A DEFENSE MECHANISM.
I MUST ADMIT I DON'T KNOW WHY
THAT MIGHT BE WHAT HAPPENED HERE.
IT SEEMS THE TOXIN MERELY DISCOMFORTED WOMEN
POSSIBLY A BIOLOGICAL FACTOR
WHY MEN?
IS IT BECAUSE WE'RE DEALING WITH A CHICK PLANT, LIKE YOU SAID?
...IT MIGHT ALSO VIEW FEMALES AS THREATS
IF IT VIEWS MALES AS PROTECTORS...
LIKE A SISTER.
WOW!
...WOULD THINK I'M SPECIAL?
SO NANAMI-KUN...

I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
HOW COULD SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPEN IN THIS DAY AND AGE?
LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT.
THAT PLANT POSSESSED PEOPLE?
SO...
THAT SMELL NEARLY MADE ME FAINT.
WHAT WAS THAT THING?
PLANTS ADAPT TO SUIT THEIR ENVIRONMENT -- INCLUDING DEFENSIVE ACTION.
I'M SURE IT WAS SOME SORT OF CHEMICAL
THEY ARE ALSO KNOWN TO EMIT CERTAIN CHEMICALS AND TOXINS.

A VEGETABLE OF DOOM!
THIS PLANT IS DEADLY!
...KEI-CHAN.
HEY...
OH!
I PROMISE TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT.
YOU BOUGHT ME THAT PLANT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT.
THANK YOU
NANAMI-KUN...
I KNEW THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE!
DON'T YOU THINK SO, NANAMI-KUN?
MOST PLANTS BRING OUT THE CARING SIDE OF PEOPLE, LIKE THIS.
CASE:9

I'M SURE WE'RE DEALING WITH A SENTIENT PLANT.
DON'T YOU AGREE, YOSHIDA-KUN?
ALMOST AS IF IT WAS PLAYING A GAME.
AND SUBSEQUENTLY DRIVE THE MALE TO COMMIT SUICIDE.
HOW COULD A PLANT INSPIRE THE BRUTAL MURDERS WE'VE BEEN TRACKING?
I DON'T GET IT.
PERHAPS THE PLANTS FEEL THE SAME ABOUT US.
HUMANS ARE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY CAN MANIPULATE PLANTS.
THEY ARE FEARSOME ORGANISMS, ABLE TO TRANSFORM THEMSELVES, ABLE TO MANIPULATE THEIR OWN ABILITIES..
THE HISTORY OF PLANTS MAKES HUMAN EXISTENCE PALE IN COMPARISON
THIS COULD ALSO BE A BIOLOGICAL WEAPON CREATED BY HUMANS, YOSHIDA-KUN.
LIKE A BAD HORROR MOVIE
SO IF THIS PLANT DECIDED THAT HUMANS WERE A NUISANCE, IT COULD STOP EMITTING OXYGEN AND RELEASE A TOXIN INSTEAD?
WE SHOULD COLLECT AND DESTROY ALL PLANTS BEING SOLD IN THE CITY.
PERHAPS THE TRIGGER IS ON TIME RELEASE FOR WEDNESDAYS.
LOOK..
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO WRAP THIS CASE UP IF YOU KEEP COMING UP WITH IDEAS?

Secret Chaser
Mystery Epilogue!
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR READING SECRET CHASER VOLUME TWO
HELLO EVERYONE! IT'S AKIYAMA AGAIN
TEE HEE

SECRET CHASER 2

TAMAYO AKIYAMA

BUT FIRST, I HAVE TO THANK YAMADA-SAN FOR MAKING ONE OF MY DREAMS COME TRUE. I GOT AN AUTOGRAPH FROM MY ABSOLUTE FAVORITE SENSEI! WAAAAHHH!

MAYBE YOU'VE ALREADY FIGURED THIS OUT, BUT PARTS OF VOLUME ONE WAS DRAWN LATER THAN VOLUME TWO. THAT MADE THIS BOOK COME OUT A LITTLE LATER THAN EXPECTED. I WANT TO APOLOGIZE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE WHO WERE INCONVENIENCED.

TRULY 申しわけありません でした.

I REALLY FEEL BAD ABOUT IT!

I ESPECIALLY HAVE TO THANK ALL THE ASSISTANTS WHO MADE THIS BOOK POSSIBLE!

THIS IS AKIYAMA. SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED DURING THESE FIRST TWO VOLUMES, BUT I'VE BEEN BLESSED TO HAVE SO MANY GREAT ASSISTANTS. WE'RE GOING TO KEEP WORKING HARD, BUT HOPEFULLY THEY WON'T ABANDON ME!

OH YEAH, MY AUTOGRAPH. I'VE BEEN SUCH A HUGE FAN OF THEIRS SINCE I WAS IN SCHOOL.

THIS AMAZING AUTOGRAPH CAME FROM MATSUMOTO REIJI SENSEI AND MAKI MICHIKO SENSEI!! AWESOME!

IT CAME ON REALLY PRETTY COLORED PAPER AND THEY DREW THEIR CHARACTERS ON IT! IT'S SO EXCITING I MIGHT EXPLODE! SO I WANT TO USE THIS SPACE TO SAY THEM MY DEEPEST THANKS. THANK YOU SO MUCH! I'LL KEEP IT AS A FAMILY HEIRLOOM FOREVER!

I HAVEN'T SLEPT SINCE I GOT IT!

☆THANKS FOR BEING A FAN! ☆

EPILOGUE END

Number 3

OH! MU BOY

OH MURASAKI SENPAI YOU'VE GOT SOME TAPE ON YOUR ARM.

SEE HER IT HAPPENS A LOT

OH, I ACTUALLY WENT OUTSIDE ONCE I'M SO EMBARRASSED!

ばっ

OH, I THINK THE POT IS BOILING!

すごいよ 神川さん!!

A Workplace Mystery Number 1

FUJI! WHO HAS THE MOST TAPE HAS

ちょー♪ ばりばり♡ しゅぉぉぉぉ ちょー♪

仕事も 追求も ばりばり♡

MU MY ROOM IS SO CLEAN!

SO SENSEI, I'M REALLY HAPPY 1

HMM? HERE IT'S DONE

SO DO MURASAKI SAN!

WHAT IN THE WORLD HAPPENED? BUT I REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR HARD WORK!

ALL POWERFUL MURASAKI-SAN!

Mysterious Experiences Number 2

Number 4

SIX FEET.

OHYSA AKI

MI-CHAN, HOW TALL IS YOUR IDEAL MAN?

SHE'S PASSED

AKI

WHAT ABOUT YOU, MU-CHAN?

TEN POUNDS!

I GUESS HER IDEAL MAN IS A CAT..

Number 2

PEOPLE ARE GETTING LAZY

HMM THE ENTHUSIASM IN THIS OFFICE COULD USE A BOOST

SENSEI!!

EAT WITH THE MAIN CAST

THE MANDATORY COSTUME THEME

BATTLE-SCARRED COSPLAY VETERAN

おおぉ

IT WAS REALLY GOOD! (SAW THIS IF YOU SEE THEM AT AN EVENT!)

SECRET CHASER
THE END

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